

Fighting 13th



Volume 1, Dec. 2004

The 13th MEU Newsletter returns

www.13thmeu.usmc.mil



Happy Holidays



Staff Sgt. Jesus A. Lora
13th MEU PA Chief

Sparkling lights on Christmas trees, the wrapping of presents and mistletoe in full bloom marks the beginning of a wonderful upcoming season with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard Camp Pendleton. To close 2004, the Public Affairs Office presents the first publication of the "Fighting 13th".

The Command Element will be in pre-deployment mode come mid-January, with the holiday season a distant memory. But with every end, there is a new, exciting adventure waiting to be explored.

Let the journey begin. The PAO will publish a newsletter each month, and provide electronic and print copies to all families. We will also publish the "Fighting 13th" on our unit website at www.usmc.mil/13thmeu/.

The "Fighting 13th" will feature a unit leader's letter and pertinent unit information. Every issue will include a

feature story highlighting a MEU Marine or Sailor. We will also print valuable

information regarding the Key Volunteer Network, Marine Corps Community Services and other family programs.

Knowledge is power, so we have added a "MEU's Around The World" page, that will highlight our fellow MEUs' activities across the globe. Happy

holidays. May all your dreams arrive under the Christmas tree and may your New Year bring excitement and grand tidings.



Staff Sgt. Jesus A. Lora
Andrew S. Esposito receives a present from Santa Claus at the 13th MEU's Christmas Party. Esposito is the son of Capt. Edward Esposito, the S-4 assistant officer.

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Mosley leads the way with 26.2 miles of hard pavement.

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Commanders Corner

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Marines and Sailors,

It was truly a pleasure to share the 229th Marine Corps Birthday celebration and enjoy the Christmas Party with so many of you and your families. My wife and I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know you better. The quality of the Marines and Sailors of the Fighting 13th, to include your great families, assures me that our upcoming deployment will be a successful one.

As the MEU Command Element continues to train our Marines and Sailors, we hope to do the same for our families. A successful Family Readiness Program is essential to ensure the well-being of all members of the 13th MEU family during the upcoming deployment. Many of us are already intimately familiar with the skills and resources necessary to prepare for and deal with the challenges that will invariably occur when the MEU deploys. Our goal is to establish an effective Family Readiness Program that will minimize the challenges of the deployment, while providing our spouses with the tools they need to handle problems with confidence themselves.

Your Key Volunteer Network is a vital component in fulfilling our responsibilities to support the families of deployed Marines and Sailors. It is the Command's official conduit of information between the MEU and its families and is an essential source of information about resources and services available to help solve the problems that may occur during our deployment.

History has proven that our Marines, Sailors, families

and friends experience less stress and manage the challenges of deployment better when they are connected with a Family Readiness Program that proactively prepares them for deployment and fosters effective communications.

The 13th MEU Family Readiness Program will not limit itself to supporting our married Marines and Sailors. I have tasked our Family Readiness Officer with the responsibility of obtaining email and mailing addresses for friends or family members that our Single Marines and Sailors wish to keep informed throughout our deployment cycle.

These points of contact will receive a copy of our 13th MEU monthly newsletter, as well as periodic email updates reporting significant MEU events both here and abroad.

If you have any questions regarding our Family Readiness Program, please send an email to Captain Robbins at FRO@13meu.usmc.mil or call him at (760) 763-0740.

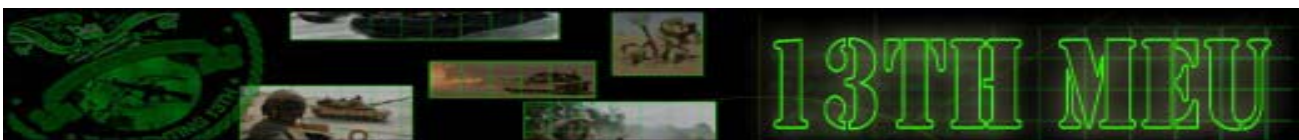
I want to take this opportunity to wish the Marines, Sailors and family members of the Fighting 13th a safe and happy holiday season. We have dedicated the next few weeks to you and your family. Take this time to fuel up for a demanding pre-deployment work-up schedule.

Semper Fidelis,

Col. James K. LaVine



Col. James K. LaVine



Sergeant Major's Corner

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First, I want to wish all of our Marines and Sailors a Merry Christmas. I hope you have all taken advantage of the liberal leave that has blessed us these past few months. Do take some more for Christmas, be safe and come back well rested.

With the New Year, the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit will have a fast moving training schedule in a short time. The workups and training leading up to our deployment in July will be intense. For those of you that are new to the 13th MEU, I know that this will be a learning experience for your family members, as well as your Marine or Sailor.

The Marine Corps is the finest military organization in the world. We are the nations' 911 force in readiness. We have earned that title by being ready when the nation is least ready. In order to remain that premier fighting force, we must maintain a rigorous training schedule. As professional Marines and Sailors, our country relies on us to be prepared for any and all worldwide contingencies.

The uncertainties that lie ahead of us demand that we maximize our time to ensure the readiness and success of our deployment. There is no doubt that sacrifices will have to be made by all of us. As family members and loved ones, I ask for your continued love and support for your Marine or Sailor.

To minimize some of the inherent stresses, try to stay aware of our training schedule and seek information about your 13th MEU. A great source of information is our monthly newsletter, which will be printed and sent to all family members. The 13th MEU's website is

another valuable source of information. This website will answer some of your questions that may arise about training times and events.

The Key Volunteers Network is on the web site and will have valuable information with regard to what is happening with the 13th MEU.

Ask questions, stay informed and if possible get involved with the Key Volunteer Program. The KVN is a wonderful link within the 13th MEU. When duty calls, the 13th MEU will be somewhere in the world doing missions in some foreign land.

The KVN is the conduit between the Marines and Sailors, families and friends. They are trained and dedicated to keep you informed. During these final months, while your loved one or family member is working up to that possible mission, please get involved. Your family readiness plays a vital role in the overall success of the 13th MEU's mission.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Semper Fidelis,
SgtMaj Deal



Sgt. Maj. David A. Deal



Admin goes the distance

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Sgt. Charles E. Moore
Public Affairs Office

"This hurts. Where's Jon? The weather's nice. It's nowhere near the end. I'm gonna die."

26.2 miles gives a person a lot of time to think. These are some of the thoughts Lance Cpl. Nickolas C. Mosley said he had during the Silver State Marathon in Reno, Nevada.

Mosley, administrative clerk, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, recently completed his first marathon. He said it was kind of a spur of the moment thing.

"It's something I hadn't really thought about," the Oklahoma City native said. "I got the idea from Sgt. (Jonathon F.) Flaucher and he pushed me."

Flaucher is one of Mosley's running partners. Mosley said the marathon idea was presented exactly a month before the race. Flaucher said he had been training for a Marathon in N.Y., but his plans fell through.

"When I told him I was doing one in Reno, he was like, 'Let's go,'" Flaucher said.

Mosley soon found the distance was a far cry from the last race he ran, a two miler, on a track, in 2002.

"The weekend before, I ran a 20 mile (run) and it was really hard. I realized I should have run other races to work up," Mosley said. "It was too late then."

A week later he was standing around with more than 90 fellow marathoners waiting for the gun to go off.

Mosley said the course was especially difficult for a beginner. It combined high altitude with lots of sandy trails, however he noted that what made it hard, also made it easier.

"The setting took my mind off the fact that

it was a long distance," he said. "It was very beautiful up there."

Less than five hours later, it was all over. "I'd like to do it again," Mosley said. "I messed up my knee a little. But as soon as it heals, I'd like to start training again."

In the meantime, Mosley said he has plenty to keep him busy. An avid music fan, he also plays guitar. He's been playing since his

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Sgt. Charles E. Moore

Lance Cpl. Nickolas C. Mosley, administrative clerk, completes a travel claim. Mosley moonlights as a guitarist and a marathon runner.

KVN News

Capt. K.D. Robbins

Family Readiness Officer

November 19, 2004 not only marked the 13th MEU's celebration of the 229th Marine Corps birthday, but also an official jump-start to our Key Volunteer Network. Mrs. Winnie Pigott, wife of Major William Pigott, MEU SJA, and Mrs. Chrissy Spooner, wife of Major (sel.) Damian Spooner, MEU S-2, joined forces to serve as 13th MEU Co-Key Volunteer Coordinators.

The 2005 deployment will mark the second deployment for both Winnie and Chrissy. Both served as Key Volunteers on the last deployment and these ladies bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to their role as 13th MEU Co-KVC's.

Aside from their experience, it is their personalities that make Winnie and Chrissy special. Their common goal is that no Marine or Sailor's spouse, regardless of age, rank or experience, should feel reluctant or apprehensive to volunteer for our MEU KV team.

Few spouses realize the impact they can make on both their Marine or Sailor and the unit as a whole. The 13th MEU Key Volunteer Network serves as the primary communication link between the commanding officer and the unit families for the enhancement of mission readiness. The KVN supports MEU spouses by providing communication from the command, information, referral services and a sense of community within the unit.

Once again, the MEU would like to thank Winnie and Chrissy for volunteering for the Co-KVC position.

The 13th MEU KVN continues to seek interested spouses. Formal training is scheduled throughout our pre-deployment work-up cycle. Childcare is provided during training. As MEU Family Readiness Officer, my wife Debbie and I

will enroll in KV training with our first group of interested spouses. If you are interested in joining the KVN team or you would like more information on Marine Corps Family Team Building programs, simply email me directly at FRO@13meu.usmc.mil or call the Public Affairs Office at (760) 763-0740.

Upcoming Events

The magic of Christmas is in the air, and with it comes the celebration of well-earned leave. The 13th MEU's Command Element block leave period starts Dec. 18th and runs through Jan 8, 2005.

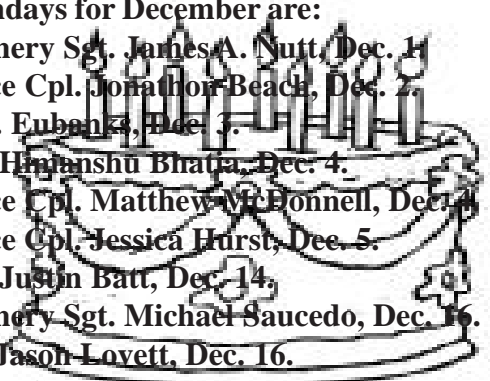
Times Square will have dropped their 2005 New Year's Ball before the 13th MEU returns. The rest and relaxation of Christmas and the New Year is the calm before the storm. "Let the training begin."

2005 dates of interest.

- Jan 17-28 MEU Rapid Response Planning Course (R2P2)(Coronado)
- Feb 14-18 Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise (MEUEX)
- March 19- 01 April Training In An Urban Environment (TRUEX)

December Birthdays

Birthdays for December are:



Gunnery Sgt. James A. Nutt, Dec. 1
Lance Cpl. Jonathon Beach, Dec. 2
SSgt. Eubank, Dec. 3
Cpl. Himanshu Bhatta, Dec. 4
Lance Cpl. Matthew McDonnell, Dec. 4
Lance Cpl. Jessica Hurst, Dec. 5
Cpl. Justin Batt, Dec. 14
Gunnery Sgt. Michael Saucedo, Dec. 16
Sgt. Jason Loyett, Dec. 16
Lance Cpl. Christ Kong, Dec. 19.

MEU's around the world

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2/24 uses police work to break insurgency in Iraq

Lance Cpl. Caleb J. Smith
Correspondent, 24TH Meu

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq (Dec. 10, 2004) —

Anyone who visits the old chicken factory that serves as the headquarters of 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines, can't help but notice its resemblance to a police station. At any given hour, Marines are getting ready to head out on patrol, others are gathering intelligence, while still others are booking detainees.

The similarities owe in large part to the nature of the task here just south of Baghdad, where old-fashioned detective work is as important as the application of military force in cracking the

reserve unit - nicknamed "Mayhem from the Heartland" - are policemen back home.

"A counter-insurgency is 50 percent military and 50 percent law enforcement," said Lt. Col. Mark A. Smith, the commander of the battalion and an Indiana state policeman. "You have to combine the two."

A law-enforcement background is so common in the battalion that even the smallest units boast a few cops.

"Almost every platoon has two or three policemen," said 1st Sgt. Grif R. Lippencott, a Naperville, Ill., policeman and the company first sergeant for Fox Company. "We rely heavily on them at the headquarters level." Hints of police

procedures can be seen in almost every aspect of the day-to-day operations here. "Many strategies employed in law enforcement in the states are in effect in Iraq," said Smith, who went on to explain how law enforcement tactics are used in capturing suspected insurgents and following the rules of evidence. Even the ways in which Marines execute raids, handle heavy traffic jams, and conduct a scene analysis resemble methods used by policemen in the United States.

The battalion even uses police procedures in its intelligence battle,



Lance Cpl. Caleb J. Smith

A Marine attached to the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit provides security with an M-240G machine gun after completing a cordon-and-search mission near Yusufiyah, Iraq. The 24th MEU continues to conduct security and stability operations in northern Babil province.

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24th

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comparing anti-Iraqi forces to criminals back home.

"There are a lot of similarities between street gangs and the guys we're fighting out here," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jim M. Roussell, an intelligence officer and 28-year veteran of the Chicago Police Department. "The enemy doesn't use uniforms, they hide in plain sight, and many are angry young men who feel a degree of hopelessness."

Another technique that works both here and at home is to reach out to the local communities. "We use ground-level intelligence," said Roussell. "That means developing informants and getting out there and talking to the people. That's the way it's done in the United States, and it's the way it's done in Iraq."

Even their use of interpreters has a police feel to it.

"Many truths can be found in verbal cues and things of that nature," said Lippencott. "We have to have people on the ground who know the language," said Roussell. "Iraqi citizens have been employed and trained as interpreters; there are also Marines who speak Arabic fluently." When a suspect is brought in, the Marines provide a detailed report on the situation, resulting in his detention.

"Their judicial system is developing," said Lippencott. "We have to build a case against the insurgents."

Whether it was a cordon and search at a house, or an Iraqi citizen with suspicious material detained at a traffic control point, Marines are expected to provide the who, what, when, where, why, and how — just as a policeman in America would. So far the police influence has paid off well

for 2/24, as they have captured approximately 200 insurgents since their arrival here in September. While the MEU will release a detainee if there is insufficient evidence to hold him, 2/24's record is thus far perfect. Every suspect pulled in by the battalion has been sent to prison.

By taking these criminals and thugs off the streets, 2/24 is also making its area safer for local residents.

"The area is getting better almost everyday because insurgents are being captured and taken into custody," said Smith. He also noted a reduction in the number of ambushes and road-side bomb attacks in recent weeks throughout 2/24's area of operation.

"There are only two options for insurgents here," said Lt. Col. Brian T. Shinkle, the battalion's staff judge advocate. "We either lock them up or we kill them."

Mosley

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freshman year. He said music was a love of his before he started playing, and the love only grew.

"Playing guitar brought me more in touch with music," Mosley said. "It opened my eyes." He said he plays with some of the Marines in the barracks "at least once a week," as well as jamming out with other tenants in his apartment complex.

Mosley said he also enjoys spending time with his wife. He said her support has kept him out of trouble. They met just before his junior year in high school and were married in April.

Mosley said he plans on getting out of the Marine Corps in two years, finishing his bachelor's degree and becoming an emergency medical technician or firefighter.